

## Message Text

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TAGS: TGEN

SUBJECT: FRENCH ACADEMY OF SCIENCES TO BE REFORMED,  
ENLARGED, REJUVENATED AND GIVEN A GREATER NATIONAL  
SCIENCE POLICY ROLE

REF: PARIS 06259

1. CONTROL OVER CERTAIN GOVERNMENT RESEARCH-RELATED FUNDS AND GRANTS, RESPONSIBILITY TO PERFORM SCIENCE POLICY STUDIES AND TO ADVISE THE GOVERNMENT ON SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY ISSUES, "DEVELOPMENT AND PROPAGATION OF FRENCH SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY," REDUCTION OF THE AVERAGE AGE OF MEMBERS FROM 75 TO 50, AND PARTICIPATION AND REPRESENTATION AT INTERNATIONAL SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY ACTIVITIES ARE THE MAJOR REFORMS TO BE MADE OF THE ONCE PRESTIGIOUS, NOW CREAKING FRENCH ACADEMY OF SCIENCES.

2. ON 25 AUGUST 1975 SECRETARY OF STATE FOR UNIVERSITIES JEAN-PIERRE SOISSON ANNOUNCED THAT THESE REFORMS HAD BEEN DECIDED UPON BY PRESIDENT GISCARD D'ESTAING ON 26 JULY, IN ACCEPTING PROPOSALS MADE BY THE PIERRE AIGRAIN COMMITTEE, WHICH HAD BEEN CHARGED BY THE PRESIDENT ON 28 FEBRUARY 1975, SEE REFTTEL, TO STUDY HOW THE ACADEMY COULD PLAY A GREATER ROLE IN NATIONAL SCIENCE.

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3. THESE CHANGES, WHICH ARE TO GO INTO EFFECT THE BEGINNING OF JANUARY 1976, ARE INTENDED TO HELP THE ACADEMY TO ACHIEVE THE GOALS SET FORTH BY THE PRESIDENT "TO HAVE THE ACADEMY MORE THAN EVER REPRESENT THE NATIONAL SCIENTIFIC COMMUNITY WITH THE SPIRIT AND FORCE ITS FOUNDERS NAPOLEON AND COLBERT ENVISAGED."

4. IN ORDER TO MAKE ROOM FOR YOUNGER AND MORE ACTIVE MEN, THE NEW TITLE OF ACADEMICIAN EMERITUS HAS BEEN CREATED, WHICH WILL BE GRANTED TO PETITIONING MEMBERS WHO ARE OVER SEVENTY. THIS TITLE WILL PERMIT THEM TO MAINTAIN THEIR STATUS, BUT WITHOUT THE RIGHT TO VOTE. THE ACADEMY WILL BE DIVIDED INTO TWO DIVISIONS: ONE FOR MATHEMATICAL SCIENCES AND PHYSICS AND THE OTHER FOR THE CHEMICAL, NATURAL, BIOLOGICAL AND MARINE SCIENCES. THIRTY PERCENT OF THE MEMBERS MUST REPRESENT TECHNOLOGY AND THE APPLICATION OF SCIENCE.

5. THE ACADEMY ON ITS OWN INITIATIVE AND AT THE REQUEST OF GOVERNMENT AGENCIES WILL CONDUCT STUDIES ON "ALL SUBJECTS PERTAINING TO SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY." FUNDS WILL BE MADE AVAILABLE FOR THE ACADEMY TO PUBLISH SCIENTIFIC SUMMARIES AND TO SUPPORT OVERSEAS TRAVEL AND PARTICIPATION IN INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS.

6. COMMENTS. PIERRE AIGRAIN, THE PRINCIPAL AUTHOR OF THE REFORMS AND FORMER HEAD OF THE GOF CIVILIAN R&D COORDINATION AGENCY, THE DGRST (GENERAL DELEGATION FOR SCIENTIFIC AND TECHNOLOGICAL RESEARCH), STRONGLY REFLECTS HIS BIAS (HE HAS BEEN A STUDENT AND LATER A GUEST PROFESSOR IN THE UNITED STATES) TOWARD THE AMERICAN APPROACH TO R&D MANAGEMENT WITH HIS PROPOSAL THAT THE ACADEMY CONDUCT STUDIES ON ITS OWN INITIATIVE AS WELL AS ON GOVERNMENT REQUEST. WHETHER HE OR OTHERS WILL USE THE ACADEMY TO SERVE AS A NATIONAL SCIENCE VOICE WHICH IS AT LEAST PARTIALLY INDEPENDENT FROM THE GOVERNMENT SCIENCE ESTABLISHMENT COMBINE, IS AN INTERESTING BUT AS YET PREMATURE QUESTION. THE ACADEMY'S CHARGE TO ENGAGE IN INTERNATIONAL SCIENCE HAS NOT YET BEEN ABSORBED AND REACTED TO BY GOVERNMENT SCIENCE AGENCIES WITH INTERNATIONAL INTERESTS, JUDGING FROM UNCLASSIFIED

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RESPONSES TO INITIAL INQUIRIES THAT WE HAVE MADE.  
GAMMON

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